



SIMPLE SOLUTIONS
for CHANGE

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE WASTE DISPOSAL IN YANGON

PROJECT REPORT

(August to October 2024)

SUPPORTED BY





SIMPLE SOLUTIONS
for **CHANGE**

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS FOR CHANGE

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS FOR CHANGE (SSFC) was established in **February 2024** with the mission to empower communities through sustainable practices that address social and environmental challenges in **Myanmar**.

MISSION

We collect and analyze information to curate and share practical solutions and inspiring stories, empowering individuals to address sustainability challenges in their daily lives.

VISION

We envision a world where everyone actively participates in creating a more sustainable future, one simple solution at a time.



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Yangon, Myanmar's largest city, generates around **2,500 tons** of solid waste daily, a significant portion of which comes from households. Rapid urbanization and limited infrastructure have resulted in improper waste disposal practices. Waste segregation and recycling are underdeveloped, with most waste ending up in landfills, leading to environmental and public health risks, such as air pollution, water contamination, and vector-borne diseases.

This report highlights the findings of the **Towards Sustainable Waste Disposal in Yangon** project by **SSFC**, which aims to raise awareness of waste segregation, encourage recycling, and promote the use of junk shops for recyclable materials. The project conducted household waste surveys, mapped junk shops, and organized waste management training to enhance community engagement in sustainable waste practices.



2. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Towards Sustainable Waste Disposal project was made possible through the generous funding of the **Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) PFP**, with additional support from the **U.S. Embassy Yangon**. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Thant Myanmar** for their invaluable collaboration, particularly in conducting the knowledge awareness workshop and developing a campaign video that contributed significantly to achieving our project goals.

We would also like to express our deep appreciation to **3Zero House** for sponsoring the venue, and to **CLAM** for serving as our media partner throughout the project.



THE PROJECT VOLUNTEERS

A special thanks goes to the dedicated **SSFC volunteers**, whose hard work and commitment have been instrumental in making this project a success. Finally, we are immensely grateful to all the participants who attended our launch event and those who actively contributed to the household waste management survey. Your involvement has been crucial to the impact we have achieved.

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3. INTRODUCTION

Yangon is home to over **5 million people** with nearly **2 million households**. Despite having major landfills (**Htein Bin, Shwepyithar, and Dala**), waste management remains inadequate, particularly regarding segregation and recycling. **Simple Solutions for Change (SSFC)** aims to address these issues by promoting waste segregation at the household level, mapping recycling points, and organizing community education initiatives. This project challenges the misconception that recycling is costly by highlighting its economic benefits and the ease of participation.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Volunteer Program & Training sessions:

- Organized workshops and training sessions for volunteers.
- 2 online training session on waste management system in urban and rural session organized with the collaboration with Thant Myanmar.



Household Waste Management Survey:

Survey to understand current waste disposal practices and identify local junk shops. This will serve as a baseline for measuring project impact.



Mapping of Local Recycling Points/Junk Shop:

Mobilize volunteers to conduct comprehensive data collection efforts aimed at identifying and mapping junk shops and individuals involved in collecting recyclable materials within Yangon.



Awareness Campaigns:

Through the report launch, organize a campaign to educate the public about waste segregation, recycling, and the environmental impact of improper waste disposal.

4. HOUSEHOLD WASTE MANAGEMENT SURVEY

OBJECTIVE

To assess household waste management practices in **Yangon** and identify opportunities for improvement.

METHODOLOGY

The online survey was conducted over 10 days, involving **130 participants** from **30 townships** across Yangon (figure 1). The survey collected demographic information, waste segregation practices, and knowledge of junk shops

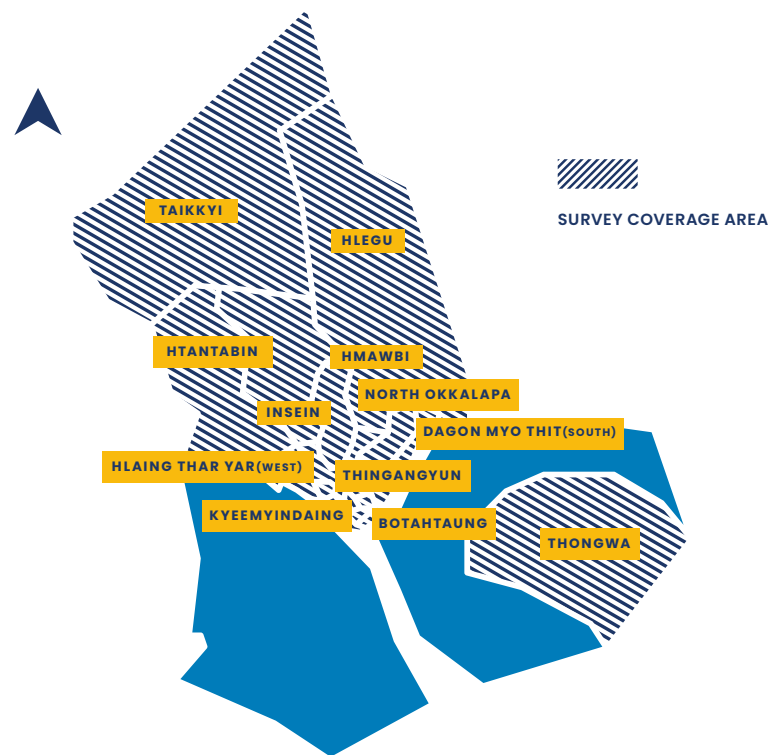


FIGURE 1: MAP OF YANGON REGION

YANGON DOWNTOWN DISTRICT (CENTRAL)

1. KYAUKTADA
2. LANMADAW
3. LATHA
4. BOTAHATAUNG
5. BAHAN
6. DAGON
7. AHLONE
8. SANCHANG
9. TAMWE
10. MINGALAR TAUNGNYUN

EASTERN DISTRICT

1. SOUTH OKKALAPA
2. NORTH DAGON MYOTHIT
3. SOUTH DAGON MYOTHIT
4. EAST DAGON MYOTHIT
5. THINGANGYUN
6. DAWBON
7. THAKETA

NORTHERN DISTRICT

1. INSEIN
2. HLAING
3. MAYANGONE
4. MINGALADON
5. NORTH OKKALAPA
6. HLAEGU

WESTERN DISTRICT

1. HLAINGTHARYA
2. KYIMYINDAING
3. HTANTABIN
4. HMAWBI
5. TAIKKYI
6. THONGWA

TOWNSHIP LIST

FINDINGS

- 54% of participants practiced waste management at home. Among these households, the most common practice was segregating **Dry/Wet waste**. Additional segregation practices included **plastics 10%**, **recyclable waste 9%**, **glass less than 5%**, **hygiene products 1%**, and **paper 1%**. [Figure \(2,3\)](#)

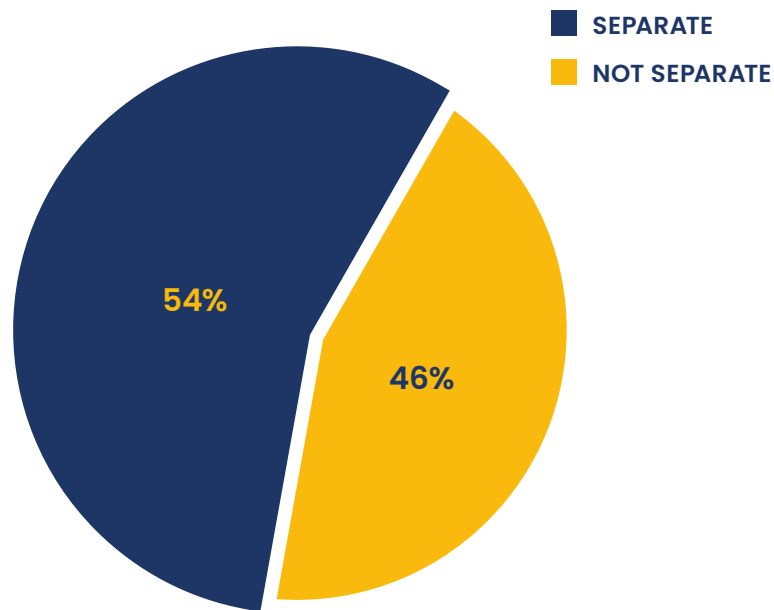


FIGURE 2: WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT HOME

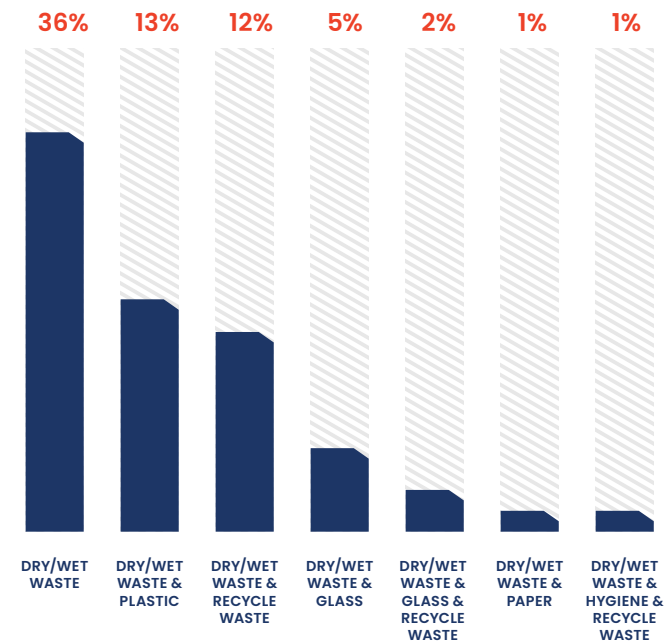


FIGURE 3: TYPES OF SEGREGATED WASTE

FINDINGS

- Most households disposed of waste at municipal collection points. Only a small percentage **4%** used junk shops for recycling. However, **87% 113 of participants** were familiar with **Junk Shops** and considered them highly beneficial to the environment. Figure (4,5)

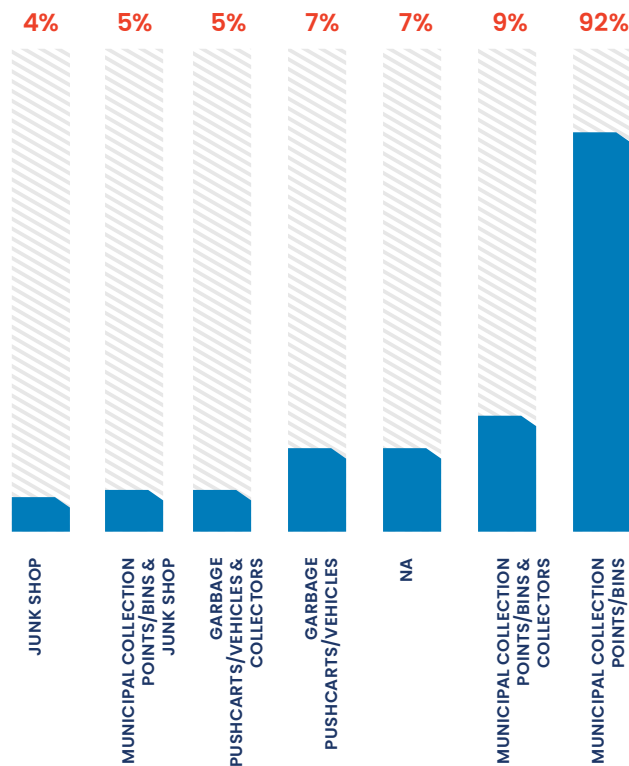


FIGURE 4: DISPOSED METHODS

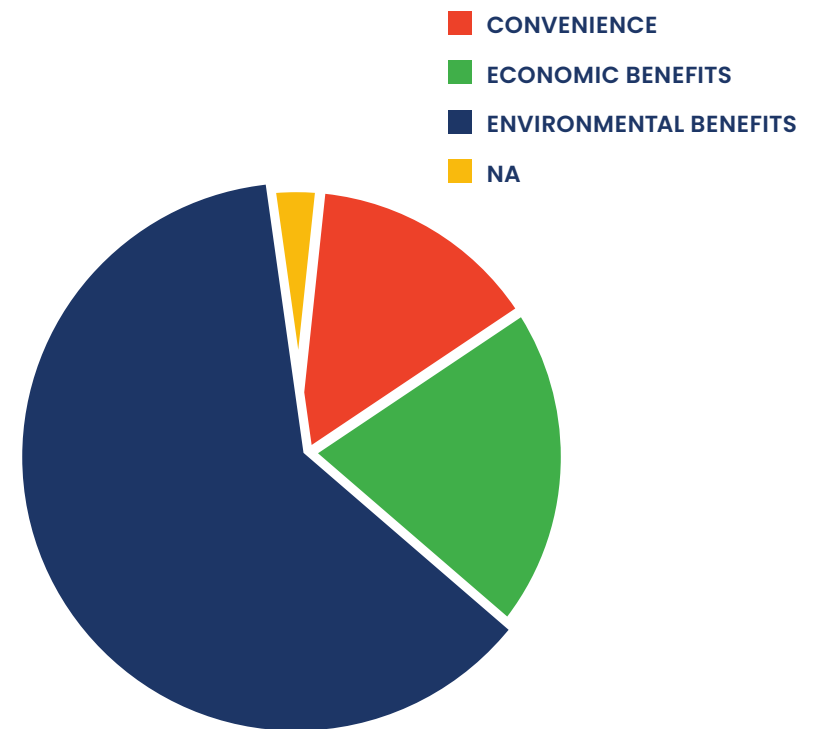


FIGURE 5: BENEFITS OF JUNK SHOPS

FINDINGS

- The majority of participants were female, **54%**, representing households with **3-4 members, 57%**. About **27%** came from households with **5-6 members**, followed by **1-2 member** households, **13%**. The remaining **3%** belonged to households with **7** or more members.
- Nearly half, **46%** of the surveys were filled out by **Students** who also represented the largest age-group of **18-25 years old**, with **54%**. Approximately one-third of participants, **32%**, were **Employed** followed by **Self-employed, 15%**, and Homemakers, **7%**. Surprisingly, there were **5%** of participants **Under 18** while the age group of **46-55** had the least representation at **2%**.

KEY INSIGHT

The survey results provided valuable insights into common waste segregation practices, disposal methods, and awareness of junk shops. Likewise, the project team enabled identification of improvements for better approach for household waste management practices. While the majority of households practiced waste segregation, the prevalence of dry and wet waste separation alone was insufficient. Promoting awareness of additional segregation categories, such as recyclable materials like **bottles and paper**, is essential, particularly when emphasizing the potential economic benefits.

5. JUNK SHOP in YANGON

Junk Shops, also known as recycling centers or waste collectors, play a vital role in Yangon's informal waste management system. These shops purchase recyclable materials such as [plastic](#), [glass](#), [metal](#), and [paper](#) from various sources, including [waste pickers](#), [old-thing buyers](#), [households](#), and [small businesses](#).

Waste pickers and old-thing buyers act as key intermediaries in Yangon's recycling network. According to Thant Myanmar's Waste Picker Mapping in Yangon Report, an estimated **15,000** waste pickers operate throughout the city. These individuals travel through neighborhoods and markets, collecting recyclable waste or purchasing reusable items from households and businesses. The materials they gather are then sold to junk shops, facilitating an efficient system for recovering waste that might otherwise be discarded. Junk shops then sort and sell these materials to recycling factories, helping to significantly reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills.



MAPPING JUNK SHOPS ACROSS YANGON

As part of the **Towards Sustainable Waste Disposal in Yangon** project, **SSFC**, with the help of its dedicated volunteers, successfully mapped **60 junk shops** across **30 townships in Yangon**. This data has been made accessible via **Google Maps**, allowing households and small businesses to easily locate nearby junk shops where they can sell or donate recyclable materials. By providing this vital information, **SSFC** aims to encourage greater community participation in waste segregation and recycling practices, contributing to a more sustainable waste management system in **Yangon**.



JUNK SHOP & REPAIR SHOP MAP

MATERIALS COMMONLY ACCEPTED AT JUNK SHOPS



PLASTIC BOTTLES



GLASS



PAPER



**OLD ELECTRONIC DEVICES
AND DEAD BATTERY**



CARDBOARD



METAL AND STEEL

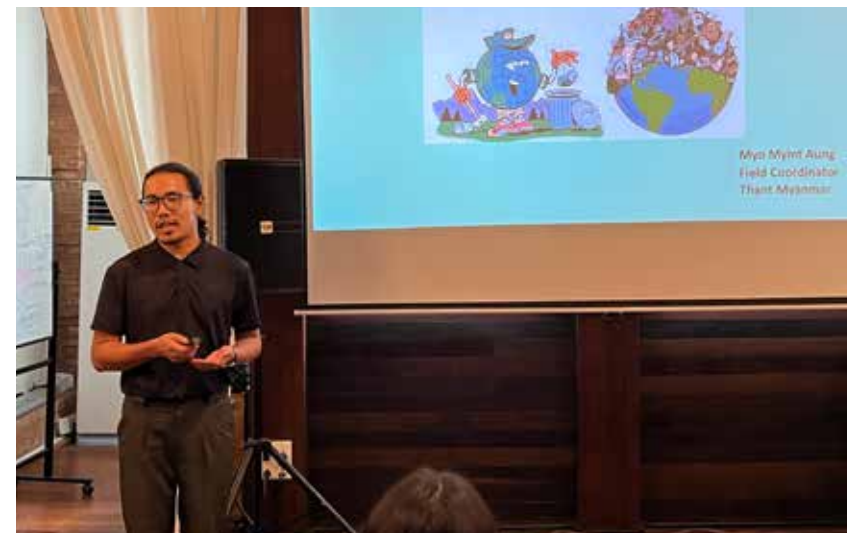
6. WASTE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

SSFC organized two days of training sessions with **20** participants on both urban and rural waste management practices. The training was provided by **Ma Thae Su Aye** and **Ko Myo Myint Aung** from **Thant Myanmar**. Most participants are currently living in **Yangon** but come from different states and regions across **Myanmar**. The training emphasized the importance of waste segregation, community involvement, and best practices in waste management.

The trained participants will now act as community leaders, helping to spread awareness about proper waste disposal practices and the significance of recycling, fostering sustainable waste management initiatives in their respective communities.



MA THAE SU AYE FROM THANT MYANMAR



KO MYO MYINT AUNG FROM THANT MYANMAR

7. PROJECT OUTCOMES



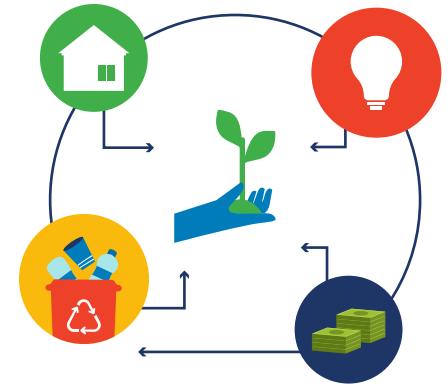
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

130 households participated in the survey, **64** participants attended the project launch event, and **20** individuals completed the waste management training, creating a foundation for ongoing public education efforts.



JUNK SHOP MAPPING

60 junk shops were mapped and made accessible through digital platforms, encouraging households to sell recyclables.



INCREASED AWARENESS

All participants of the projects now better understand the importance of waste segregation and the potential for economic benefits through recycling, such as participants of the project launch, volunteers of the project, participants of the training, and participants of the assessment.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPAND PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

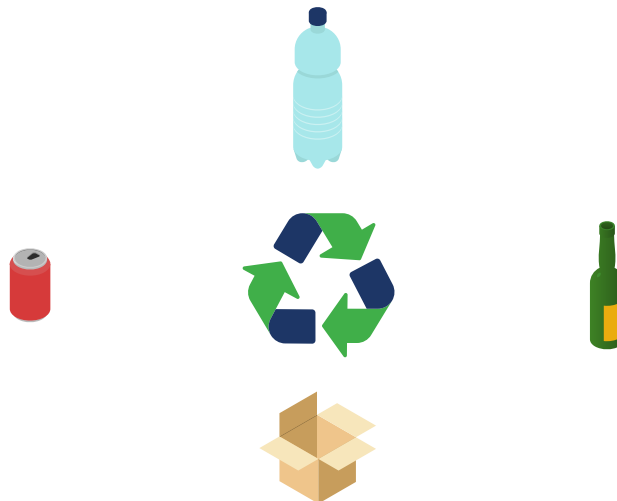
Focus on educating the public about the benefits of segregating additional waste materials, such as [plastic](#), [paper](#), and [glass](#) to promote better waste management practices.

IMPROVE JUNK SHOP ACCESSIBILITY

Raise awareness about the locations of junk shops in **Yangon** and promote their economic benefits, encouraging the community to utilize them for recycling and waste management.

PROMOTE THE 3RS (REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE)

While our project emphasizes waste segregation and recycling, the most critical step in sustainable waste management is reducing waste. Strengthen the promotion of the **3Rs** through ongoing education and community engagement initiatives to reduce waste generation at the source.



9. CONCLUSION

- **Towards Sustainable Waste Disposal in Yangon** project has successfully raised awareness of household waste management practices, identified key challenges, and offered practical solutions for promoting waste segregation and recycling.
- **SSFC** will continue to conduct a Household Waste Management Survey in Yangon to monitor the impact of the Towards Sustainable Waste Disposal in Yangon project and measure long-term improvements in waste management behavior.
- To further promote waste reduction and segregation, **SSFC** has developed a knowledge awareness video as part of the campaign “လျှော့လည်းသုံးပါ၊ ခွဲလည်းပစ်ပါ”, educating the public on why reducing and segregating waste is essential and how to effectively implement these practices.

WATCH HERE!



- By continuing to engage the community and stakeholders, **SSFC** aims to foster long-term behavioral change in waste disposal practices, contributing to a **cleaner and healthier Yangon**.



SIMPLE SOLUTIONS
for **CHANGE**

**WE SHARE SIMPLE SOLUTIONS AND STORIES
FOR BRIDGING THE GAPS OF SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES!**

THANK YOU!

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simplesolutionsforchange@gmail.com